

Message Text

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ACTION IO-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

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USIA-15 ACDA-10 /095 W

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R 101300Z NOV 75

FM AMEMBASSY GABORONE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7256

INFO AMEMBASDFLANTYRE

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LOURENCO MARQUES

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MASERU

AMEMBASSY MBABANE

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

USUN NEW YORK 302

UNCLAS GABORONE 1541

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PINS, US, BC, RH

SUBJ: BOTSWANA PRESS ON AMB. BENNETT'S UN STATEMENT

REF: (A) GABORONE 1491 (B) STATE 253191

1. GOVERNMENT-PRINTED BOTSWANA DAILY NEWS OF NOVEMBER 7

FEATURED FRONT PAGE ARTICLE ACCEPTING USUN STATEMENT ON

RHODESIA. TEXT OF ARTICLE, TITLED "RHODESIA AND ARMED U.S.

MEN CONDEMNED," IS AS FOLLOWS:

RHODESIA AND ARMED U.S. MEN CONDEMNED.

ADDRESSING THE FOURTH COMMITTEE OF THE UNITED NATIONS' GENERAL

ASSEMBLY ON OCTOBER 24, 1975 U.S. AMBASSADOR W. TAPLEY BENNETT

JR., CONDEMNED RHODESIAN SOLDIERS' SHOOTINGS AT MATSILOJE

VILLAGE ON OCTOBER 19, 1975.

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SAID THE AMBASSADOR, "I HAVE NOTED THE COMMUNIQUE FROM THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF BOTSWANA CONCERNING THE INCIDENT OF THE BOTSWANA-RHODESIA BORDER ON OCTOBER 19 IN WHICH A GROUP OF RHODESIAN SOLDIERS REPORTEDLY OPENED FIRE ON THE BOTSWANA VILLAGE OF MATSILJOE. ACCORDING TO BOTSWANA AUTHORITIES, THE VILLAGERS FLED AND RELATED THE INCIDENT TO THE NEAREST POLICE AUTHORITIES IN FRANCISTOWN, 56 KILOMETRES TO THE WEST. A BOTSWANA PRESS RELEASE DESCRIBED THIS AS ONE OF SEVERAL BORDER INCIDENTS OVER THE PAST FEW MONTHS.

HE CONDEMNED SUCH "AGGRESSIVE ACTS BY THE SECURITY FORCES OF THE ILLEGAL RHODESIAN REGIME AGAINST INNOCENT PEOPLE IN A NEIGHBOURING LAND," ADDING, "SUCH ACTS COULD JEOPARDIZE THE EFFORTS OF RHODESIA'S NEIGHBOURS, INCLUDING SIR SERETSE KHAMA, PRESIDENT OF BOTSWANA, TO HELP FIND A PEACEFUL SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM OF MAJORITY RULE AND CASTS DOUBT ON THE SINCERITY OF THE INTENTIONS OF THE RHODESIAN REGIME TO NEGOTIATE HONESTLY WITH THE NATIONALIST GROUPS."

COMMENTING ON THE COMMUNIQUE FROM THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF BOTSWANA REGARDING THE TWO AMERICANS WHO WERE ARRESTED FOR ILLEGAL POSSESSION OF FIREARMS WHILE IN BOTSWANA "ON A MISSION FOR THE RHODESIAN SPECIAL BRANCH." AMBASSADOR W. TAPLEY SAID, "WE ARE AWARE THAT TWO AMERICAN CITIZENS HAVE BEEN TRIED AND CONVICTED BY THE BOTSWANA COURTS FOR BEING IN ILLEGAL POSSESSION OF FIREARMS."

"I WANT TO REITERATE THE STATEMENT MADE ON OCTOBER 9 IN THE FOURTH COMMITTEE BY U.S. DELEGATE CONGRESSMAN DONALD FRASER CONCERNING U.S. POLICY REGARDING ITS CITIZENS WHO MAY FIGHT AS MERCENARIES FOR THE RHODESIANS. MY GOVERNMENT DOES NOT APPROVE OF THE SERVICE BY ANY AMERICAN CITIZEN IN THE FORCES OF THE RHODESIAN REGIME. OUR LAWS PROVIDE THAT ANY AMERICAN CITIZEN ENLISTING IN THE ARMED FORCES OF ANOTHER COUNTRY RUNS THE RISK OF LOSING HIS U.S. CITIZENSHIP, AS WELL AS BEING LIABLE TO CRIMINAL PROSECUTION. WE REMAIN ADAMANTLY OPPOSED TO U.S. CITIZENS SERVING IN THE FORCES OF THE ILLEGAL RHODESIAN REGIME."

THOMSEN

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